

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON A NEW PROPOSED CHANGE OF
METHOD FOR THE DETERMINATION OF COLOUR IN PLANTATION
AND MILL WHITE SUGAR**

DEADLINE: **15 November 2006**

COMMENTS:	To: Dr Michelle McQuillan Food Standards Agency Rm 115c Aviation House London UK WC2B 6NH FAX No. 00 44276 8193 Email: michelle.mcquillan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk	Copy to: Secretary Codex Alimentarius Commission Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme – FAO Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 Italy Fax: +39 (06) 5705 4593 E-mail: codex@fao.org
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BACKGROUND

CODEX STANDARD ON SUGARS

1. At its 24th Session in 2001, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) agreed to a request to change the method for the determination of colour in plantation or mill white sugar (PMWS) in the Codex Standards for Sugars from GS2/3-9, to GS2/3-10. However, in doing so it also requested that the Codex Committee on Sugars (CCS) examine whether a change in method of analysis for determination of colour may additionally require a change in the specification of colour for plantation or mill white sugar. The Delegation of India supported by several delegations was of the view that the revision of colour specifications was not necessary (ALINORM 01/41, paras 104-105).
2. The CCS is guided on methodology for colour determination in the Codex standard by the International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis (ICUMSA), the body responsible for methods of analysis for sugars. Following the 2001 CAC meeting the CCS Secretariat elected to delay consultation on the need for any adjustments to the specification when it became aware that ICUMSA was examining the methodology of colour determination and the appropriateness of a variety of Methods including GS 2/3-9 and GS 2/3-10 in PMWS in detail.

3. Following completion of the ICUMSA review, a letter was circulated by the CAC Secretariat (CL 2005/18-CCS, April 2005) recommending that method GS 2/3-9 be re-installed as the preferred ('Accepted') method of analysis for all sugars including PWMS (up to 600 iu), and that method GS2/3-10 be restricted to white sugars with a colour less than 50 iu.
4. The comments received following this letter have been reviewed and the Secretariat notes that the interpretation of the ICUMSA recommendations as detailed in the April 2005 Circular Letter did not take into account a third method (GS1/2-8) that was viewed by ICUMSA to be the 'official' method (See recommendations below). ICUMSA define an official method as one which meets all requirements, whereas an accepted method is one that is demonstrably useful and has found an established application, or which do not lend themselves to collaborative testing.

Extract of Recommendations from ICUMSA; Atlanta 2004

Recommendation No. 3

Method GS2/3-10 "The Determination of White Sugar Solution Colour" should have the scope changed to limit it to a maximum of 50 iu.

N.B. The method used to determine the colour value should still be quoted with the result.

Recommendation No. 4

Method GS2/3-9 (2002) "The Determination of Sugar Solution Colour at pH 7.0" continues to be limited to a maximum of 600 IU and its status should be changed to "accepted".

Recommendation No. 6

Method GS1/2-8 "The determination of Raw Sugar Solution Colour, White Sugar and Plantation White Sugar at pH 7.0 by the MOPS Method" The scope of the method should be changed to remove the lower limit and its status changed to Official.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF METHOD FOR THE DETERMINATION OF COLOUR IN PLANTATION AND MILL WHITE SUGAR

5. As the Secretariat for the CCS, the UK is required to ascertain whether as a result of CAC's agreement to change the method for the determination of colour to GS2/3-10, an adjustment to the specification for plantation or mill white sugar (PMWS) in the Codex Standard is required. Given the recent recommendations by ICUMSA, the Secretariat now propose that CCS should consider whether the methodology for colour determination in the Codex Standard needs to be amended in line with ICUMSA's recent conclusions and changed to method GS1/2-8.
6. Before any amendment to the methodology for colour measurement in PMWS is made, CCS must first agree the way forward. The Secretariat of CCS is therefore requesting Codex members and interested international organizations consider and provide comments on method GS1/2-8 as the new method for colour determination in all white sugars including plantation or mill white sugar (PWMS) in line with the recent ICUMSA recommendations. Codex Members and observers wishing to provide comments should do so, preferably by email, to the above addresses **by 15 November 2006.**